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ABSTRACT

Many communities have replaced top-down, highly centralized educational structures with a decentralized model in which decisions are made at the school level. This concept relies on broad participation and support from the school personnel and the community. However, the effort to decentralize schools often faces opposition. This problem can be overcome by setting clear expectations, establishing definite goals, promoting social interaction, and exerting control over the work environment. A study of one school district in Lancaster, Ohio, in the early stages of implementing site-based decision making examined the attitudes of teachers and administrators toward change. The first stage of the study statistically analyzed voting by administrators and teachers on site-based decision making. The second phase involved interviewing teachers about their attitudes and experiences with the new organizational structure. Findings revealed that elementary school teachers were slightly more supportive of site-based decision making than secondary school teachers. A few teachers said that larger school size hindered implementation efforts. In general, teachers supported site-based decision making but had concerns over its implementation. Past decision-making structures and other factors also influenced teachers' views of site-based decision making. (Contains 14 references.) (JPT)

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Teacher Concerns as They Consider an Organizational Change to Site-Based Decision Making

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The national mood regarding education is one of reform. Many communities are looking to replace the top-down, highly centralized educational approaches of the 1970s and early 1980s with a decentralized model where the school building becomes the focus of reform. This grass roots management approach has come to be commonly known as site-based decision making.

Site-based schools depend on broad based participation from taxpayers, parents, students, teachers, and principals. They are generally provided with increased authority, autonomy, flexibility, and allocations of resources, and are entrusted with greater decision making powers in the areas of personnel, curriculum, and budget. District office administrators are seen more as facilitators who help steer the district while permitting local initiatives to flourish.

Decentralizing schools to a site-based model will not happen without resistance. The literature regarding educational innovation describes the elements of successful change and discusses the many barriers to change. Berman and McLaughlin (1978) state that it is the quality of working relationships among teachers, the active support of principals, and the effectiveness of project directors which assures successful project implementation. Sergiovanni (1991) includes the individual, the school, the work flow, and the political system as key elements to the initiation, implementation, and institutionalization of any change. Fullan (1982) suggests that most innovations never reach the institutionalization phase because people inherently resist change. This view is echoed by most researchers of educational change including Gross, Giacquinta, and Bernstein (1971), Wayson (1988), Sarason (1982), and Berman and McLaughlin.

Educational change must be thoughtfully approached if it is to be accepted. Hall and Loucks (1978) studied the needs of individuals who were considering adoption of an innovation. They developed a profile of concerns which seeks to describe individual needs during the initiation, implementation, and institutionalization of a change. Mealiea (cited in Sergiovanni, 1991) also suggests that certain individual needs must be met before change can be successfully implemented. He concludes that resistance to change may be overcome if the following needs are adequately addressed: (1) The need for clear expectations; (2) The need for future certainty; (3) The need for social interaction; (4) The need for control over our work environment and work events.

Purpose and Design of the Study

This study examined the initial implementation stages involved in considering a change to site-based decision making in one school district. Teacher concerns were studied as they related to staff relationships within the school and work environment and to the acceptance or rejection of the change initiative. Six research questions were addressed:

1. Does the willingness of teachers to implement site-based decison making vary with the level of instruction?
2. Does the size of the school affect the willingness of teachers to change to site-based decision-making?
3. Do principals and teachers view site-based decision making differently?
4. What are the personal and professional concerns of teachers regarding implementation of site-based decision making?

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5. To what extent, if any, do past decision making practices affect teacher willingness to implement site-based decision making?

6. What other factors influence teachers to view site-based decision making favorably or unfavorably?

Answers to these questions should prove helpful to school districts who are considering initiation of an innovation such as site-based decision making. The study should also be useful to districts who are in the initial implementation stages of change or are in the process of reviewing previously implemented changes.

Methodology

The study consisted of an analysis of change within one school district which was in the early stages of implementation of site-based decision making. A two-pronged exploratory approach was utilized in order to study the many complex change-relationships within the district.

The first phase of the study utilized a quantitative, statistical analysis of voting behavior of 422 administrators and teachers in Lancaster City Schools, as they were asked to vote for or against implementation of site-based decision making within their schools. This portion of the study specifically addressed research questions one through three.

The second phase of the study addressed the six research questions in a qualitative manner, exploring teacher concerns related to initial implementation of site-based decision making. Teachers were selected to participate in the interviews based on predetermined criteria, drawn from the research questions as well as from the patterns derived from the quantitative portion of the study. Balance in representation between elementary and secondary schools, size of schools, and differences between the views of principals and teachers was considered in selecting interviewees.

Length of teaching tenure in the district, verbal abilities, gender, and known attitude or vote on the ballot/survey were also considered, in order to develop a purposeful, focused sample. Since the researcher wished to interview subjects who were quite familiar with the district, teachers who had taught more than five years within the district, and who resided in the community, were preferred. An attempt was also made to select teachers who had taught in a variety of buildings, under a number of building principals, so that they might have many reflective experiences of various types of school organizations. Subject selection also considered the verbal abilities of the teachers, again so that reflective, rich information would be obtained. A balance between male and female teachers was a further consideration in subject selection. Finally a diversity in votes on the ballot/survey was sought, with extreme views favored. It was felt that individuals who had rather extreme views on site-based decision making would provide more dramatic information regarding concerns within the various school buildings. Patton (1990) refers to this as "critical case sampling" and concludes, "While studying one or a few critical cases does not technically permit broad generalizations to all possible cases, logical generalizations can often be made from the weight of evidence produced in studying a single critical case" (p. 55).

Quantitative data from the ballot/surveys was collected on January 17, 1991. Initial interviews were scheduled from December, 1991, through January, 1992. A follow-up round of interviews with participants was scheduled for April, 1992. This second round of interviews permitted a further review of teacher concerns related to recent district changes in the implementation of site-based decision making. Thus, it was possible to review and analyze the evolution of teacher concerns over a period of time, from January, 1991, through April, 1992, while the initiatives for site-based reorganization were evolving. Spindler and Spindler (1987) endorse study over time stating that this allows findings to emerge with great clarity.

Quantitative Instrumentation

The ballot/survey used to determine willingness of teachers to implement site-based decision making, contained the following five options:

Option 4: It is a great idea and I will be one of the leaders in implementing it.
Option 3: It is a good idea and I will work for it.
Option 2: I do not agree, but I will work for it.
Option 1: I do not agree, but I promise not to block it.
Option 0: This is not a good idea and I am going to block you if you try to implement it.

This ballot/survey had been designed as part of a negotiated agreement between the school district and the teachers' union specifying that site-based decision making would be implemented at a pilot site during the 1991-92 school year. The ballot/survey was not intended to serve as part of this research study, and therefore participant's votes were not affected by any knowledge that this data would be used in the future to analyze organizational change within the school district.

Qualitative Instrumentation

This study used a series of guided, open-ended questions which centered around the topics of leadership and decision making practices at the interviewee's present and past schools; preferred leadership and decision making practices of the interviewee; thoughts related to the January, 1991, ballot/survey and knowledge and feelings toward site-based decision making. Open-ended questions relating to these topics were utilized in order to gain a wide variety of reactions from the interviewees.

It was the goal of the first round of interviews, to allow each teacher to reflect on practiced and preferred leadership styles, as related to their experiences in the school district. Each teacher also recalled and discussed the circumstances surrounding the January, 1991, ballot/survey, when all certified staff were asked to vote on whether their school building should implement site-based decision making. Finally, teachers were able to define and articulate what they understood the term "site-based decision making" to mean.

The second round of interviews with the same teachers occurred in April of 1992, after many schools had concluded their discussions related to becoming site-based schools during the 1992-93 school year. At this time the interviewer sought to probe into teacher responses to the increased commitment of the district to implement site-based decision making and to update any attitudinal changes regarding site-based decision making.

Teacher responses were tape recorded during the first round of interviews and follow-up notes were made. The recordings were then transcribed for review.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study consists of a quantitative, correlational study of teacher attitudes toward change and a qualitative ongoing analysis of these attitudes as they evolved over a period of time.The chi square tests calculated from the ballots/surveys served as a reference point for a qualitative analysis. Data from the interview transcripts were classified using the Hall and Loucks (1978) Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) during the last phase of data analysis. Teacher concerns were carefully reviewed and classified into the following stages: awareness, informational, personal, uncertainty, management, consequence, collaboration, refocusing Hall and Loucks (1978) have used the CBAM extensively as a personalized staff development assessment instrument and have found that individuals do not have concerns at only one stage at a time. An individual concerns "profile" emerges with stages 0, 1, and 2 reflecting more initially intense fears as a change is contemplated. Stage 3, Management Concerns, increase in intensity as implementation of a change begins, while stages 0, 1, and 2 decrease. Over extended time, the Impact Concerns, stages 4, 5, and 6, become most intense. Thus, teachers' concerns with initiating site-based decision making within their schools were analyzed within the construct of the CBAM. Content analysis of data serves to organize and simplify the complexity of the interview transcripts into meaningful and manageable themes.

A second, more inductive method, of data analysis was also utilized in reviewing interview transcripts. In this case the transcript material was read and reread allowing basic

patterns, themes, and categories to emerge out of the data, rather than imposing predetermined categories. The researcher reviewed written notes taken of the interviews, as well as documents related to Lancaster City Schools' site-based decision making process. This study of the data, combined with a thorough knowledge of related professional literature, enabled the researcher to develop a story-line related to teachers' concerns as they contemplated implementation of site-based decision making.

Finally, all methodologies were reviewed to address the six research questions posed in Chapter One. The first three questions, dealing with level of instruction, school size, and difference in attitudes between teachers and principals, were answered primarily in quantifiable terms using chi square tests of data. These areas were further developed in the inductive portion of the study. Questions four through six, which discussed personal and professional concerns, past decision making experiences, and other factors, were primarily addressed in the qualitative portions of the study.

Limitations

The research is inherently limited by the non-standardization of the data collected. Results are limited by the level of rapport developed by the interviewer, the candor of the interviewees, and the accuracy of recall of interviewees regarding their voting choice in January, 1991. The small sample size of the interviews limits the ability to generalize findings to broader audiences. Finally, the study is confined to the perceptions, interpretations, and biases of the researcher

Summary of Findings

The quantitative findings provided a statistical analysis of level of instruction, size of school, and teacher versus principal preferences as related to the willingness to implement site-based decision making. Elementary teachers and teachers from small schools were more amenable to implementation of change. Principals were more willing to implement and lead the change than were teachers.

The 11 case studies explored teacher perceptions related to decision making processes, including existing interpersonal relationships, governance structures, and site-based management. The studies also examined teacher concerns pertaining to lack of information and misinformation about the change, distrust of the administration, and the leadership styles of principals. School size, resistance to change, and the nature of the ballot also surfaced as issues related to successful implementation of organizational change. In some cases, the manner in which the vote was executed may have affected voting choices. Finally, a gender-related voting pattern appeared.

Teachers named the principal, the building steering committee, and individual teachers as playing key roles in interpersonal relations within their schools. In January, 1992, ten out of 11 teachers observed that the principal was the primary decision maker. In the April, 1992, follow-up interview, teachers continued to report that the principal was the primary decision maker, however most teachers added the qualification that committees were more active and the school climate was more participatory. Male teachers were more apt to reserve the veto power for the principal.

In most schools, building steering committees were actively participating in decision making. In several schools, the committees were reported to be making small decisions as they exercised their fledgling decision making skills. A teacher from a site-based school indicated that the steering committee in her school made final decisions with the principal having an equal vote to other members.

Teachers in some schools observed that certain individuals within the school exercised influence over decisions. They perceived that this influence was personality driven rather than determined by position or seniority.

Teachers included the roles of district administration, the union leadership, parents, students, and community members in discussing "ideal" school governance structures. They

recommended that the district administration should set broad parameters within which schools would have the freedom to individualize their programs. Teachers emphasized that risk taking be encouraged and supported by the district. Three teachers specifically discussed past district reactions to mistakes made in buildings. They wanted reassurance that they would be supported in future innovative pursuits.

Views regarding union leadership appeared to be influenced by gender and level of instruction, with three secondary, male teachers valuing the union's advocacy role while three female teachers were less adversarial in their views. One secondary, female teacher was opposed to fair share union membership while two female elementary teachers were complimentary of the union's role. Secondary teachers were more critical of union policies than were elementary teachers. Four elementary teachers had no specific positive or negative comments.

Teachers' views regarding parent, student, and community involvement were guarded with few preconceived ideas related to the roles of these individuals. All teachers favored student involvement but were unclear at what age or in what form the involvement should occur. In discussing community involvement, gender and level of instruction appeared to be influencing factors. Secondary, male teachers proposed advisory participation while elementary, female teachers supported full participation.

Teachers agreed that increased teacher participation would result in better solutions to problems. They were not opposed, in principle, to a higher level of involvement in school decision making, but raised many personal and management concerns related to implementation of the change. Teachers were concerned with time constraints and staff development. They reported that their work day was already overfilled with activities and they did not see how additional meeting time could be added. Teachers feared that site-based decision making would involve many more meetings as staff discussed and deliberated issues. At least half of the teachers expressed concern that they did not want site-based implementation to mean released time away from their students.

Teachers were concerned that site-based decision making would be difficult, if not impossible, to implement in large schools. Three high school teachers feared that school size would pose implementation problems and two of these teachers voted negatively. Four teachers speculated that small schools would be better able to implement site-based decision making.

In studying the voting choices of the 11 interviewees, a gender pattern was evident. Five out of six female teachers voted positively while only two of five male teachers voted positively. Patterns of voting did not appear to correlate with the levels of instruction of teachers.

Discussion and Conclusions

In the following section, the research data are reviewed in relation to the research questions proposed in the beginning of the study and the existing literature.

Research Question 1: Does the willingness of teachers to implement site-based decision making vary with the level of instruction?

The researcher attempted to separate gender differences from levels of instruction, in order to ascertain whether differences in teacher concerns were primarily influenced by level of instruction or gender. It should be noted that the elementary level of instruction typically has more female teachers than does the secondary level. However the factors could not be separated with any certainty because the ballots on which individual teachers recorded their votes did not contain information on teacher gender. The interview sample, while it produced a clear picture of gender differences, was too small to generalize to all the subjects of the study.

The researcher also sought to distinguish between the willingness of teachers to initiate site-based decision making and the willingness to implement and sustain site-based decision making.

In the comprehensive Rand studies of educational change (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978), the effect of instructional level on organizational change was discussed. Berman and MacLaughlin found that change was more difficult to implement and sustain at the secondary

level. They concluded that while there were numerous reasons for the difficulty in implementing change in secondary schools, perhaps an essential reason was that secondary teachers were typically more subject oriented in contrast to the child-centered orientation of elementary teachers. Berman and McLaughlin did not address the gender differences between elementary and secondary levels of instruction.

In reviewing Lancaster teachers' ballots using quantitative measures, Berman and McLaughlin's conclusions are verified, as elementary teachers clearly voted to initiate site-based decision making more frequently than did their secondary counterparts. However, when the voting results of the 11 teachers who participated in the case study portion of the research are scrutinized, level of instruction does not appear to be correlated with willingness to initiate site-based decision making. The apparent contradiction may be explained as a result of gender, as interviewed female teachers, at all instructional levels, voted to implement change at significantly higher rates than male teachers.

In contrast to initiation of site-based change, which seemed to follow gender lines, implementation strategies appeared to correlate with levels of instruction. Of the 11 teachers interviewed, the six elementary teachers were more receptive to full implementation of shared decision making. They were more favorably disposed to the facilitative role of the Teachers' Association, were more willing to fully involve community members and students in governance, and advocated shared decision making with the principal.

In summary, while elementary teachers voted in favor of initiating change more readily than secondary teachers, the ballot results may have been influenced by the differences in gender, as further study revealed that in a case study of 11 teachers, gender, not level of instruction, appeared to be the deciding factor when voting in favor of site-based decision making. Differences appeared to exist between the implementation of site-based decision making by levels of instruction. Elementary teachers seemed more comfortable with full implementation and secondary teachers were more guarded in their approach.

Research Question 2: Does the size of the school affect willingness of teachers to change to site-based decision making?

When Berman and McLaughlin (1978) conducted their study of 293 federally sponsored innovative programs, they collected data related to size of school in an attempt to ascertain whether school size impacted the successful implementation of new programs. They found no relationship between successful program implementation and school size. In reviewing the ballots of Lancaster teachers by size of school, a correlation was evident, with teachers from small schools voting more positively to implement site-based decision making. This correlation was reinforced during the interview process, as seven of 11 teachers speculated that site-based decision making would be more easily implemented in small schools. Three teachers at Lancaster High School felt the large size of the staff and the large school building hampered the open communication which was so essential to site-based decision making.

Research Question 3: Do principals and teachers view site-based decision making differently?

While the quantitative findings of the study revealed that principals were more willing to adopt the change and be leaders in implementing the change, the validity of these results is questionable in light of comments made by teachers during the interviews. Several teachers reported that principals voted in favor of implementation of site-based decision making, while privately expressing misgivings regarding the proposed change. They speculated that since principals were required to sign their ballots, perhaps they felt compelled to support the change. More conclusive results pertaining to research question 3 would necessitate an anonymous vote by principals.

Research Question 4: What are the personal and professional concerns of teachers regarding implementation of site-based decision making?

Teachers expressed support for the philosophy of site-based decision making, exhibited universal concerns related to the change, and recalled frustrations with barriers to

implementation. These concerns were categorized and analyzed using the Concern-Based Adoption Model (CBAM).

During the case study portion of the research, the 11 teachers verbalized many of the same benefits of site-based decision making as summarized by Anderson (1990) and Kirst (1988), agreeing that open communication and participation in decision making were desirable.

Teachers seemed fairly comfortable with the philosophical precepts of site-based decision making; they expressed numerous concerns pertaining to the change. These concerns mirrored Mealiea's four universal needs for (1) clear expectations, (2) future certainty, (3) social interaction, and (4) control over the work environments and work events (cited in Sergiovanni, 1991). Teachers interviewed repeatedly expressed a need for clear expectations and wanted specific information regarding site-based models. They requested access to information and training, and worried about the many misconceptions pertaining to site-based decision making. They had numerous questions specific to their roles in the change and worried about their relationships with fellow teachers, the building principal, the district administration, the parents and students, the Teachers' Association, and the community-at-large. Teachers expressed a need for future certainty, wondering who would take responsibility for decision making. They discussed possible negative social interactions, and worried that an elite group of teachers, parents, or students would dominate school governance. Finally, they expressed a need to have some reasonable degree of control over their work environment and were particularly concerned about reasonable demands on their time and equitable sharing of resources.

The personal and professional concerns of the teachers presented were varied and fragile. Gross, Giacquinta, and Bernstein (1971) discussed the fragile nature of change and postulated that formal leaders must take responsibility for removing obstacles to the organizational change. They contended that individuals may initially favor the change but later become opposed to implementation because they had encountered too many barriers. Gross, Giacquinta, and Bernstein's point was well illustrated by Teacher 3 who, over a period of three months, became frustrated with the relational barriers within her building, experienced doubts that site-based decision making would result in better quality education for kids, and changed her view from leading in site-based decision making to opposing the change.

In applying the Hall and Loucks model to the 11 teachers interviewed, of the nine teachers who were contemplating a change to site-based decision making, the preponderance of concerns occurred in the area of personal uncertainty, stage 2. Additional concerns appeared in the areas of information and management, stages 1 and 3. The nature of concerns of the two teachers who were teaching in the site-based pilot schools was markedly different from the nine teachers who were not at site-based schools. The two teachers from site-based pilot schools verbalized no concerns in stages 0, 1, or 2, rather exhibited concerns primarily in stages 3, management , and 5, collaboration. Hall and Loucks predict such a change in the concerns profile because these teachers were in the initial phases of implementation of site-based decision making. This difference in profiles cannot however be directly attributed to the fact that the teachers worked at site-based pilot schools. These teachers may have had similar profiles if their schools had not been site-based; or they may have had a traditional pattern prior to the vote. While the CBAM provides a construct for considering concerns, it does not purport to establish causal relationships.

Although the teachers in this study discussed many personal and professional concerns with the change, they never verbalized an outright rejection of the values embodied in site-based decision making. Careful analysis of concern data revealed the universal needs of individuals as they contemplated change. Additionally, the concerns varied depending upon the level of involvement with the innovation. Teachers contemplating change had different concerns than teachers implementing change.

Research Question 5: To what extent, if any, do past decision making practices affect teacher willingness to implement site-based decision making?

The review of teacher concerns from the interview data was replete with examples of teacher' attitudes and expectations which were influenced by past decision making practices. Teachers reacted to new situations related to site-based decision making, based on their past relationships and experiences. Their discomfort at changing their current paradigms of decision making was clear. When frustrations mounted, one teacher reverted back to old, safe ways of thinking.

During the interviews, teachers tended to hold on to past experiences and relational patterns. They viewed central office administrators somewhat suspiciously, with several teachers stating it would take them a long time to develop trust and overcome the deep hostilities developed during contract negotiations.

Teachers discussed concerns related to staff relations within a site-based governance model. They felt that many problems, which had in the past been efficiently resolved by the principal or the building representative to the Teachers' Association, would now be aired openly among staff members. One teacher succinctly summarized these concerns when he observed that teachers, who were accustomed to someone quietly fixing their problems for them, would now be expected to solve his own problems. Several teachers pointed out that business would be conducted with much more candor, with feelings probably being hurt in the process. Two teachers expressed concern that the Teachers' Association would no longer support teachers through the grievance process.

As Sarason (1982) described the principal as the gatekeeper to change in the school, so teachers' views toward site-based decision making were influenced by the past decision making behaviors of their principals. In the study, teachers from site-based schools reported that the collaborative leadership styles of their principals encouraged them to support site-based decision making. Much as Fullan (1982) predicted, the researcher found that teachers who perceived their principals as preferring top-down control, were less comfortable approaching a change to site-based decision making.

Past union experiences and relationships also affected teachers' perceptions regarding site-based decision making. A preponderance of teachers were uncomfortable with the new role of the President of the Teachers' Association and several expressed concern that they might lose hard won contractual agreements. Although they did not necessarily like the past adversarial relationship between teachers and administrators, they approached new relationships with an air of distrust and caution.

Finally, teachers were accustomed to viewing students, parents, and community members as receivers of educational programming. During the interviews, teachers frequently referred to themselves as the "professional experts." The prospect of abandoning or modifying past relationships and viewing students, parents, and community members as fellow decision makers, seemed difficult for most teachers. Few of the teachers interviewed had really given this area much thought, and their responses were guarded.

Research Question 6: What other factors influence teachers to view site-based decision making favorably or unfavorably?

A number of factors, not specifically addressed in research questions one through five, affected teacher acceptance of the change process. Teacher views were influenced by the manner in which the formal leaders initiated consideration of the change, the gender of teachers, and a general lack of information, and misinformation. Finally, some teachers were simply comfortable with the status quo and saw no reason to change school governance.

The manner in which site-based decision making was introduced and considered, affected teachers' views. When the change was presented in an open climate of staff participation, as described by Berman and McLaughlin (1978), it was favorably viewed by teachers. Conversely, when the change was dictated by the formal leadership, as described by Wayson (1988), it was viewed unfavorably and either ignored or opposed by teachers.

Gender proved to be an influential factor as teachers viewed initiation and implementation of site-based decision making. As evidenced by the ballots cast by the 11 teachers, female teachers were more receptive to initiating a change to site-based decision making. They also were more favorably disposed to fuller implementation of change. Female

teachers advocated that the principal function as an equal member of the building steering committee and did not favor giving the principal the veto power. Male teachers advocated the veto power for the principal. In reviewing gender patterns as related to parents and community members, male teachers approached site-based change more cautiously, providing advisory input, but not voting rights, to these constituents. Female teachers were quicker to accept parents and community members as full voting members of the educational team. Union issues reflected the same gender pattern, with three of the five male teachers discussing the union's teacher advocacy role, while five of the six female teachers discussed collaborative efforts between teachers and administrators. Gilligan (1982), in developing a theory of the unique psychological development of women, similarly concludes that females are more easily reconciled to innovations than are men. Piaget and Lever (cited in Gilligan, 1982) also allude to differences between males and females in observing that males are more concerned with the legal aspects of rules and development of fair procedures for adjucating conflicts, while females are more concerned with the continuation of relationships.

Lack of information and misinformation influenced teachers' views regarding site-based decision making. Teachers were unanimous in expressing a need for more specific information regarding the proposed governance change. They discussed the need for training in communication skills, conflict resolution, and consensus building. Teachers were disturbed by the amount of misinformation pertaining to site-based decision making. Comments centered around misconceptions that site-based schools would permit staff to cavalierly eliminate policies, or that the workload would be increased, with endless hours spent in meetings.

Finally, teachers reported that a certain comfort level with the status quo caused teachers to view site-based decison making unfavorably. Wayson (1988) and Boysen (cited in Jennings, 1991) noted the resistance of teachers to change as being a barrier to implementation of site-based decision making. Lortie (1975) discussed the natural preference of teachers to close their classroom doors and avoid interaction with other staff. All teachers exhibited some level of resistance to change. Three teachers reported that little activity to initiate site-based decision making was occurring in their schools. These teachers observed that certain staff members viewed site-based decision making as just another educational fad which, in due time, would fade away

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations for further research are made.

1. Further quantitative and case study research is needed regarding the willingness of teachers to implement change as related to level of instruction, manner of implementation, and gender.
2. It is recommended that further research explore the differences between principals' and teachers' concerns as they consider initiation of site-based decision making.
3. It is recommended that further developmental study be undertaken regarding the manner in which decision making is shared in site-based schools. Decision making practices of school board members, district office administrators, building principals, teachers, parents, and community members need to be analyzed, over a period of time, as site-based governance evolves through the stages of initiation, implementation, and institutionalization.
4. Utility of the Hall and Loucks Concerns-Based Adoption Model in predicting teacher concerns related to site-based decision making needs further study using a larger sample. The developmental emergence of concerns could be reviewed before initiation of site-based decision making, during implementation of the change, and after the change has been institutionalized.
5. The effect of past negative decision making experiences upon successful implementation of site-based decision making needs to be examined.
6. Gender as an independent variable related to willingness to initiate and implement site-based decision making needs further study.

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